## *REMARKS/ARGUMENTS*

In response to the Office Action mailed March 22, 2006, Applicant amends his application and requests reconsideration. In this Amendment claim 3 is cancelled, leaving claims 1 and 2 pending.

Claim 1 is amended for clarity and also to include the limitation of examined claim 3. Claim 1 is directed to a printed circuit board that includes both external wiring and internal wiring. The external wiring on an external surface of the printed circuit board includes a plurality of outermost-layer signal lines. These outermost-layer signal lines are connected through respective vias to the internal-layer signal lines that are inside the printed circuit board. A connector is mounted on one of the external surfaces of the printed circuit board. The connector has multiple connector lines that are connected to respective outermost-layer signal lines. Further, lengths of conducting paths are equalized to avoid skew, i.e., shifting of relative phases of signals propagating in respective outermost-layer signal lines. That skew problem is compensated by requiring that the total length of each signal path, meaning the total length of the corresponding outermost-layer signal line, from the via hole to the connector, plus the length of the connector line that is connected to the outermost-layer signal line, is equal, substantially, to every other such signal path. This feature is explained somewhat more clearly in amended claim 1 than perhaps appeared in examined claim 1. Support for the amended claim appears throughout the patent application and particular attention is directed to the paragraph beginning at line 9, page 7.

Claims 1-3 were rejected as unpatentable over Verhoeven (U.S. Patent 4,992,052) in view of Theus (U.S. Patent 4,904,968). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Theus was relied upon only with respect to describing the printed circuit board including internal wiring and via holes for the conductors extending perpendicular to the principal surfaces of the printed circuit board to provide electrical access to the internal wiring. Theus was not cited as suggesting any means of responding to skew between multiple signal paths. Therefore, no further discussion concerning Theus is necessary or provided.

In the Office Action, in citing Verhoeven, the Examiner directed attention to Figures 1-3. In rejecting claim 3, at page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner directed attention to Figure 3 of Verhoeven. Figure 3, as is apparent from studying the figures of Verhoeven, is a sectional plan view taken along lines III of Figure 2 of Verhoeven. As a result of projecting the Verhoeven structure onto the plan view plane, it is impossible to compare the relative lengths of connector lines of the connector because of the distortion in actual distances between objects that is introduced in the projection. In other words, to the extent the connector lines are angled in planes oblique to the plane of the view of Figure 3 of Verhoeven, the actual lengths of the conductors cannot be determined from that Figure 3. Rather, a figure like Figure 4 of Verhoeven must be consulted in order to begin to reach any conclusion with respect to the limitation of examined claim 3, which now appears in amended claim 1.

Verhoeven fails to include any disclosure that could suggest the substantially equal lengths of the signal paths that include parts of outermost-layer signal lines and parts of the corresponding connected connector lines. There is no discussion whatsoever of skew in Verhoeven nor any suggestion as to how to solve such a problem. Moreover, Verhoeven provides various connector lines of respective lengths, and even of different lengths, to achieve different goals. For example, as described in column 10 in the paragraph beginning in line 19, Verhoeven describes use of three different lengths of contacts, a first length for grounding, a second length for power supply voltage, and a third, shortest length for signal lines. This description, particularly, emphasizes that the invention as defined by claim 1, leaving aside the elements for which Theus was cited, is neither disclosed nor suggested in Verhoeven. Accordingly, the purported modification of Verhoeven with Theus cannot establish *prima facie* obviousness of claim 1 or of its dependent claim 2.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey A. Wyand, Reg. No. 29,458
LEYDIG, VOIT & MAYER
700 Thirteenth Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005-3960
(202) 737-6770 (telephone)
(202) 737-6776 (facsimile)

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